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# DEPARTMENT OF VISITING NURSING AND SOCIAL WELFARE\*



IN CHARGE OF

EDNA L. FOLEY, R.N.

## TRAINING SCHOOL FOR MIDWIVES AT BELLEVUE AND ALLIED HOSPITALS

BY CLARA D. NOYES

A SCHOOL has been organized at Bellevue Hospital for the training of midwives. This is entirely separate and distinct from the training school for nurses, although it is under the auspices of the hospital management and the general superintendent of training schools supervises the work. A small hospital, with a house in the rear in which the pupil midwives live, at 223 East 26th Street, has been carefully fitted up and arranged as a teaching centre. There are accommodations for twelve patients in a delightfully bright and airy ward on the second floor, as well as nursery, delivery room, lavatories and linen room. The first floor is reserved for office, examining and class room and a large kitchen and dining-room. The building was opened for the reception of patients August 1, 1911. The first midwife entered July 27. There are now ten pupil midwives in training, and in addition to the work in the school, an outpatient service is being developed, the pupils attending cases accompanied by a doctor and a nurse. The course is six months in length, and is organized on the same general principle as a Nurses' school. The nursing and the housekeeping instruction are under the direction of a graduate nurse. The medical instruction and medical care of patients is under the direction of a resident physician. Agnes E. Aikman, formerly of the Lying-in Hospital, Boston, is the supervising nurse, with two graduate day and night assistants.

Great attention is paid to teaching the pupil midwives practical housekeeping, simple cooking, cleaning, laundry work, sanitation and hygiene, in addition to the care of mother and babe, preparation for confinement, making dressings, sterilizing, etc. The equipment approxi-

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\* Contributions for this department may be sent to 105 West Munroe Street, Chicago.

mates as nearly as possible the simple things to be found in the homes of the poor. The senior midwife has attended about sixty cases in the ward, delivered seven, and attended four in the district.

Seven nationalities are represented in these ten pupils, but the question of languages, which seemed as if it might present practical difficulties, has not proven a serious drawback, as the pupils all speak a little English, and are most anxious to learn everything in English. The pupils are required to provide and wear uniforms of gray gingham, with elbow sleeves and a round collar; white aprons without bibs. No allowance is given, the pupils also providing for their own laundry work.

Although this is the first School of Midwifery in America, and is in the embryonic stage, and it is, perhaps, too early to prophesy the ultimate results, yet there seems to be no practical reason why it should not succeed. Surely the need for such schools is plainly evident when we remember that one-half the births occurring in New York City are attended by midwives, and until now, no opportunity has been given them whereby they might prepare themselves for this important branch of work.

#### ITEMS

CONNECTICUT, DERBY.—The semi-annual meeting of the Connecticut State Association of Visiting Nurses was held at Library Hall, Derby, November 21. Nurses were present from Middletown, Hartford, New Haven, Enfield, Waterbury, Bridgeport, Branford, New Britain and Lakeville. After the business meeting, at which it was voted to hold only annual meetings hereafter, the Derby Association entertained the nurses to an automobile trip to the State Sanatorium for Tuberculosis at Shelton. Returning to Library Hall, Derby, a social hour and refreshments followed.

NEW BRITAIN.—At the sixth annual meeting of the New Britain Visiting Nurse Association, the report of Jennie P. Hill, head nurse, contained the statement that every physician in the city had called the nurses during the year. Such splendid team work as this deserves special commendation and may well be sought by other visiting nurse associations. In New Britain, co-operation with other workers for civic betterment has lightened the work of the nurses and they are seeing in the homes of their patients the results of the health talks and instruction given in the schools and public library by the Tuberculosis Association. The following paragraph from Miss Hill's report deserves to be quoted in full. After giving a detailed statistical state-

ment for the year, during which 1200 more calls were made than in 1910, she says:

You have heard the statistical account of the year's work done by your two nurses. It may not seem a large amount in numbers to you, but there is another side of the question to consider. There is a limit to every person's ability and endurance, and from several years' personal experience in work of this sort I have come to know that quantity does not always mean quality. The nature of the work needed decides the amount of time spent and some calls do not take over fifteen minutes to render all needed service, while others take from two to three hours of the most arduous labor, and the nurse leaves that patient, exhausted nervously and physically. So mere figures do not, and never can, tell the story of such service as this, as all who have ever been ill will know. I sometimes wish it were not customary to report the number of calls made. It establishes false standards and creates a tendency to try for a big showing in numbers, rather than doing our very best work, in ministering to the home, as well as the bedside care given. It has been our experience that in our rush periods, when the largest number of calls are made, we are unable to do full justice to the patients, for lack of time.

Many emergencies meet the nurse in the homes, besides the mere care of the patient, and she should have time enough to acquaint herself with the family status, and see where she can help smooth out the trouble.

Numbers are beginning to mean very little to nurses, for the results of good work are bound to disclose themselves, while numbers may awe but no longer entirely convince friends or contributors.

MARYLAND, BALTIMORE.—It is to be hoped that a large edition of the 1910 report of the Tuberculosis Nurses' Division of the Baltimore (Md.) Health Department, Ellen N. LaMotte, nurse in chief, has been printed, for nurses all over the country will appreciate its helpfulness if they are fortunate enough to obtain a copy. It is profusely illustrated with excellent photographs and contains many interesting tables and diagrams, but the logical arrangement of the sub-divisions and paragraph headings, as well as the clear, forceful style in which it is presented, make it a compendium of scientific data as well as a unique report of this special branch of nursing. Opening with a brief history of tuberculosis nursing in Baltimore, which owed its inception to the Visiting Nurse Association, Miss LaMotte reviews the work of their first year as municipal employees. Such subjects as: object and plan of work, selection, salary, hours and uniforms of nurses, patients, dispensaries, physicians, institutional care, charitable and special relief, fumigation results, and death rate, are treated briefly, but fully, and are accompanied by convincing diagrams that show how carefully the

work has been planned and systematized. In conclusion, the need of registration and better hospital facilities are emphasized, and special mention of the need for the education of the public by the nurses, until they shall have gradually worked themselves out of employment, is made. The latter will not come for many years, Miss LaMotte thinks, as it will require a long period to educate the community to the advisability of voluntary segregation of all tuberculosis patients. Miss LaMotte is to be congratulated on an excellent report of a splendid year's work.

PENNSYLVANIA, PITTSBURGH.—Tuberculosis nurses will be glad to hear that Pittsburgh (Pa.) is to have a municipal tuberculosis sanatorium, provided for by a bond issue of \$250,000. In connection with this, it is proposed to establish a municipal dispensary, which will be a receiving station for the sanatorium and a clinic for the treatment and observation of home cases. The survey, made in 1909 by the six tuberculosis nurses of the Board of Health, helped to bring about this much-needed institution, for by a house-to-house canvass in the thickly populated districts they brought to light many unregistered cases and much valuable information concerning the tuberculosis patients and their families. Perhaps the most striking result of this survey is shown by the more than 50 per cent. increase in the number of tuberculosis cases reported to the Department of Health over those reported during 1908, the preceding year. Besides co-operating with the State Tuberculosis Dispensary, the nurses visit and instruct all patients reported to the Board of Health.

KENTUCKY, LEXINGTON.—Chloe Jackson (Mercy Hospital, Chicago), Superintendent of Tuberculosis Nurses for the Fayette County Anti-Tuberculosis League, has recently been made Executive Secretary for the League, while retaining her position as Superintendent of Nurses. Miss Jackson organized the nursing service in Lexington in August, 1910.

MICHIGAN, BATTLE CREEK.—Mrs. S. M. Baker (Battle Creek Hospital), visiting nurse of Battle Creek, Michigan, has been asked by the Board of Education to undertake the school nursing as well, and several of the leading physicians and surgeons of Battle Creek have volunteered to examine and treat all children whom she may refer to them. Mrs. Baker has recently been inspecting the work of the school and visiting nurses in Chicago and Evanston.

**ALABAMA, BIRMINGHAM.**—The 1911 report of the Medical Inspector of Public Schools of Birmingham, Ala., speaks highly of the work of the two school nurses, whose co-operation and tact in the homes of defective children it especially commends. To encourage poor parents of such children to take them to the dispensary, one of the school nurses was always present during the clinics attended by the school children. Her knowledge of the home conditions of each child helped the physicians, and her presence naturally made each little patient feel that he had a "friend at court" and made her own subsequent home work in his case easier. Too often busy out-patient department nurses do not appreciate how much the presence of "my nurse" helps the patient to bear the ordeal of history-taking and physical examination bravely, and this innovation on the part of the Birmingham school nurses is one well worth imitating in other cities. At least 20 per cent. of the school children found in need of treatment applied to the dispensary. Linna H. Denny (Illinois Training School) was the first school nurse in Birmingham.

**ILLINOIS, CHICAGO.**—The nursing staff of the Municipal Tuberculosis Sanitarium has been increased to thirty nurses. Their Christmas season was a particularly busy one, as six children's parties were given by the different dispensaries, and innumerable dinner and good-fellow surprises were arranged for the patients too old to be invited to the Christmas trees (lack of space in each instance made all patients over sixteen "too old" for the party, which perhaps is the only reason why one is ever too grown-up to appreciate Santa Claus and his perennial mysteries). The nurses of the Jewish Aid and Rush clinics (May Middleton and Elsa Lund, head nurses), gave their annual party in Hull House to 300 little boys and girls, and Russian and Irish, Italian and Pole forgot that they lived on different sides of the street and welcomed St. Nicholas with true American enthusiasm. Miss Jane Addams and Mrs. Joseph T. Bowen, through whose kindness the use of Bowen Hall was secured, were present. A truly gorgeous evening party for 300 little Bohemians was arranged by Harriette Leland Mullany, head nurse of the Gads Hill clinic, and if the awed and respectful silence with which these stolid little citizens-in-the-making greeted Santa Claus and his helpers was an accurate index of their inward emotions, the nurses and friends who had worked hard for their pleasure needed no other reward. Through the kindness of the Hyde Park Baptist Church Sunday School, which gave its tree and a present from each child to the Stock Yards Dispensary (Rosalind Mackay, head nurse) the tuberculous

children from "behind the Yards" spent a joyous three hours in the clinic rooms, that lent themselves well to all sorts of Christmas decorations.

Hahnemann Clinic (Olive Tucker, head nurse) and Post Graduate Clinic (Annie Morrison, head nurse) each surprised their children with a tree and presents, made possible through the kindness of the many friends of the nurses and the work. The children of St. Elizabeth's Dispensary (May McConachie, head nurse) attended the party at the Northwestern University Settlement given the children by all the nurses in the district through the courtesy of Miss Harriet Vittum, head resident. Lives of tuberculous children are so unhappy frequently and the results of their treatment so questioned by skeptical parents (who may or may not accept the physician's diagnosis) that these Christmas parties serve two ends—they give the little ones pleasure and increase the influence of the nurses in their homes, for it is the advice of the nurse who is also the "family friend" that is carried out more spontaneously than is that of the nurse who comes simply as the nurse from the clinic. Chicago is fortunate in having a daily paper that believes in the blessedness of giving, and through its columns, every December, it gives opportunities for the more fortunate to share their happiness at this season. Families referred by name, address, and ages of members, to the *Chicago Tribune* are given by its special editor to all who desire to act the part of Good Fellow at Christmas time, and the families of several hundreds of tuberculosis patients had reason to indorse the Good Fellow movement this year, for the nurses sent in a great many names and none were overlooked. In addition, one of the stars of the Chicago Grand Opera Company accompanied Edna Beyrer, nurse of the Elizabeth McCormick Out-Door School, on her rounds and played Santa Claus to three of her families.

OHIO, CINCINNATI.—Mary Wilson, graduate of the Cincinnati Jewish Hospital, who has recently taken the Social Service Training at Bellevue Hospital, has been appointed Social Service Worker of the Cincinnati General Hospital.

The Cincinnati Board of Health added, on January 1, two nurses to the staff of school nurses, Lucy Hatfield and Alice N. Thayer, both graduates of the Cincinnati Hospital and Training School.

Lucy Vane, graduate of the Cincinnati Hospital and Training School, has been added to the nursing staff of the Anti-Tuberculosis League of Cincinnati to care for its bed-ridden tuberculosis cases. Her duties began January 1.